

THE THEORY OF THE PERFECT MAN IN IBN 'ARABĪ'S *FUṢŪṢ AL-ḤIKAM**

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I. Introduction

It is well known that the concept of the Perfect Man (*al-insān al-kāmil*) and the metaphysical anthropology based on it occupy important places in Ibn 'Arabī's philosophy together with the theory of the unity of existence (*waḥdat al-wujūd*). Due partly to the lack of a coherent system and the loose, fluid character of his terminology, it is extremely difficult to define many technical terms peculiar to his metaphysics. The phrase "the Perfect Man" is not an exception. Although this concept was often discussed in a general way by many previous scholars,⁽¹⁾ nobody has yet made a careful semantical analysis of his writings. Many scholars who treated this concept were influenced by interpretations of various followers of Ibn 'Arabī, such as Jīlī⁽²⁾ and Jāmī,⁽³⁾ who tried to systematize his "enigmatic" metaphysics, sometimes at the risk of oversimplification. Very often the concept is identified with the Logos which has in the metaphysics of Ibn 'Arabī many different names:⁽⁴⁾ the Muhammadan Reality (*al-ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya*), the Pen (*qalam*), the Intellect (*'aql*), the Reality of Realities (*ḥaqīqat al-ḥaqā'iq*), etc.⁽⁵⁾ Furthermore it is sometimes identified with Muḥammad.⁽⁶⁾ To my knowledge, however, Ibn 'Arabī does not apply the phrase "the Perfect Man" either to Muḥammad or to any term signifying the pre-existent Logos. Therefore it is necessary to distinguish his philosophy from those of his later followers and systematizers, and treat each of them separately. Although such people as Jīlī and Jāmī were profoundly influenced by Ibn 'Arabī, they are still individual thinkers who did not simply repeat the philosophy of their master, but developed and elaborated it with their own ideas.

The objective of this paper is to analyze all the uses of the phrase "the Perfect Man" in the *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, and to elucidate its meanings and special

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connotations from the context.

II. The Perfect Man as Adam

Although the phrase “the Perfect Man” (*al-insān al-kāmil*) is to be found before Ibn ‘Arabī,⁽⁷⁾ it is widely accepted that he was the first to use this phrase as a technical term.⁽⁸⁾ However, he used this phrase rather infrequently in his works. For instance, it is used only once in the three important treatises of metaphysics edited by H. S. Nyberg.⁽⁹⁾ The phrase does not appear at all in the *Shajarat al-Kawn*,⁽¹⁰⁾ although S. H. Nasr thinks that this treatise is specifically concerned with the idea of the Perfect Man.⁽¹¹⁾ In his most mature and influential work, the *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, the phrase is used only seven times.⁽¹²⁾ In four cases out of the seven, the phrase is used in the description of Adam, who symbolizes man; indeed three instances of this phrase occur in the chapter on Adam.

1. Man’s relation to the universe is like the jewel’s relation to the seal ring (*khātām*).⁽¹³⁾ The jewel is the place of the engraving (*naqsh*) and the insignia (*‘alāma*) with which a king seals (*yakhtim*) his treasure house. For this reason, man is called the vicegerent (*khalīfa*), for God preserves His creation through him, just as the seal (*khatm*) preserves the treasures. As long as the king’s seal is on them, nobody dares to open them except with his permission. In this way, He appointed him the vicegerent for the preservation of His kingdom [i.e., the universe]. As long as the Perfect Man is in the universe, the universe continues to be preserved. Do you not see that, if he ceases to be and the seal of the treasury of this world (*al-dunyā*) is broken, what He stored in it would not remain in it, and everything which is in it would depart? Each part would be reunited with every other part, and the whole matter would be transferred to the next world (*al-ākhirā*).⁽¹⁴⁾ And he [the Perfect Man] would become the eternal seal on the treasury of the next world.⁽¹⁵⁾

2. God described Himself as being the Manifest (*ẓāhir*) and the Hidden (*bāṭin*), and He created the universe as [constituting] the invisible (*ghayb*) world and the visible (*shahāda*) world, so that we can perceive the Hidden with our invisible nature and the Manifest with our visible nature. He

described Himself with [the two opposing attributes of] Satisfaction (*riḍā*) and Wrath (*ghaḍab*), and created the universe as the possessor of Fear and Hope, for the universe fears the wrath of God and hopes for His satisfaction. God described Himself as the possessor of [the two opposing attributes of] Beauty and Majesty and created us as the possessor of Awe and Intimacy. He expressed these two [opposing] attributes⁽¹⁶⁾ with His two hands which are used for the creation of the Perfect Man, because he unites the realities (*ḥaqā'iq*) of the universe and its individual manifestations.⁽¹⁷⁾

3. Iblis was [just] a part of the universe, and this synthesis (*jam'īya*) [which Adam possessed] did not occur in him. Because of this [synthesis], Adam was the vicegerent. If he were not manifest (*ẓāhir*) in the image of Him who appointed him the vicegerent in the universe [literally: in the place where He appointed him the vicegerent], he would not be the vicegerent. And if there were not in him everything required by his subjects (*ra'āyā*), over whom he is appointed the vicegerent, — because of their dependency on him, it is necessary that he provide them with everything they need; — he would not be the vicegerent over them. Therefore the vicegerency is fitting only for the Perfect Man. He [God] composed his outer image (*ṣūra ẓāhira*) from the realities (*ḥaqā'iq*) of the universe and its forms (*ṣuwar*, pl. of *ṣūra*), and He composed his inner image (*ṣūra bāṭina*) in His own image ... He [God] is manifest in this way in every existent (*mawjūd*) of the universe according as the reality of that existent requires it.⁽¹⁸⁾ However, none has the totality (*majmū'*) which the vicegerent possesses. It is only through the totality that he obtained [his vicegerency].⁽¹⁹⁾

Furthermore, the phrase "the Perfect Man" in the chapter on Moses is also applied to Adam, therefore this passage can be analyzed together with the above three passages from the chapter on Adam.

4. For this reason, he [the Prophet] said concerning the creation of Adam, who is the exemplar (*barnāmaj*) which unites the descriptions (*nu'ūt*) of the Divine Presence (*ḥaḍra ilāhīya*), that is, the Essence (*dhāt*), the Attributes (*ṣifāt*), and the Actions (*af'āl*), "God created Adam in His image." And His image is nothing but the Divine Presence. He created in this

noble compendium (*mukhtaṣar*), which is the Perfect Man, all the Divine Names and the realities (*ḥaqā'iq*) of those which exist outside him in the great universe which is separate (*munfaṣil*) from him. And He made him the spirit (*rūḥ*) of the universe.⁽²⁰⁾

In all the above four quotations, “the Perfect Man” is applied to Adam. Several scholars have noticed the connection between the Perfect Man and Adam,⁽²¹⁾ seeing in it the influences of the Gnostic Urmensch, God-Man myth, which Reitzenstein and Bousset exhaustively investigated.⁽²²⁾ That the phrase “the Perfect Man” (*teleios anthrōpos*) had been used by some of the Gnostic sects is generally known,⁽²³⁾ yet there are fundamental differences between the Urmensch of Gnosticism and the Perfect Man of Ibn ‘Arabī.

First, while the myth of the Urmensch is usually based on the fantastic cosmogonic myth which is widely different from the Scriptures,⁽²⁴⁾ Ibn ‘Arabī’s description of Adam as the Perfect Man is closely based on the Qur’an and the *Ḥadīth*.⁽²⁵⁾ According to the Qur’an, God determined to create His vicegerent on earth (2/30), and created Adam with His two hands (38/75). However, the angels protested against Him, saying, “Will you place therein one who will do corruption there and shed blood, while we proclaim your praise and call you holy?” (2/30).⁽²⁶⁾ He taught all the names to Adam. On the other hand, the angels satisfied themselves only with the glorification of God and they lacked the knowledge God conferred on Adam (2/31–33). Therefore God placed Adam over the angels and ordered them to prostrate themselves to Adam (2/34; 15/30; 38/73).⁽²⁷⁾ These stories are well incorporated by Ibn ‘Arabī in his description of the Perfect Man. And the famous Biblical *Ḥadīth*, “God created Adam in His own image,” is also alluded to several times in the above quotations, both directly and indirectly.⁽²⁸⁾

Secondly, the Urmensch myth of Gnosticism is always followed by the myth of the fall of the Urmensch, which expresses the negative, pessimistic attitude toward the universe and the earthly existence of man. For the Gnostics, the earthly man is not the Urmensch, but the fallen man who is imprisoned in the flesh.⁽²⁹⁾ This is quite contrary to the philosophy of Ibn ‘Arabī. For him, the universe has a very positive value. It is also created in the image of God; it is the only means to reach God.⁽³⁰⁾ The Perfect Man is not the mythic heavenly man of Gnosticism, but the earthly man with a body and spirit. Since this is the most characteristic point in Ibn ‘Arabī’s theory of the Perfect

Man, we shall discuss this point in more detail.

In Ibn 'Arabī, Adam as the Perfect Man is not the "historical" Adam, that is, the first man,⁽³¹⁾ but the symbol of man. It can be said that in all the above four quotations, the Perfect Man, Adam is interchangeable with simple "man". In other words, when Ibn 'Arabī describes the Perfect Man, Adam, he is in fact speaking of the ontological meaning of human existence. This explains why the phrase "the Perfect Man" does not appear frequently in his works. For instance, the philosophy of man which is very similar to that expressed in the chapter on Adam in the *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* is also treated in the *Inshā' al-Dawā'ir* and the *al-Tadbīrāt al-Ilāhiya*. However, in these works, the phrase "the Perfect Man" does not appear at all, instead the generic "man" is used throughout the text.

Let us now examine the meaning of human existence expressed in the above four quotations which contain the phrase "the Perfect Man."⁽³²⁾ First, Ibn 'Arabī defines man (i. e. the Perfect Man) as the vicegerent of God on earth, as can be seen in the first and third quotations. The implication of the vicegerent is that man is the highest among all the creatures. All other creatures are subjected to him. And their existence depends upon the existence of man. The universe is perfected through him. Indeed he is the ultimate cause of creation. On this point, Ibn 'Arabī usually supports his view with the Qur'anic verse, "He has subjected to you, as a charge from Him, all that is in the heavens and earth."⁽³³⁾ Man is also called the spirit of the universe⁽³⁴⁾ and the seal of God's treasury.

The vicegerency of man is said to come from the synthesis (*jam'īya*) or the totality (*majmū'*), which among creatures only man possesses. How should we understand "synthesis"? It can be interpreted at two levels. At the first level, man is the synthesis of two opposing qualities, as seen in the second quotation. Man unites the intelligible and sensible worlds in him as the possessor of both the spirit and flesh. This double nature of man is very often emphasized in his anthropology, and it can be said that it is one of the most characteristic features of his thought.⁽³⁵⁾ For him, the flesh does not have negative value, as opposed to Neo-Platonic or Gnostic thought, but is an indispensable element to the synthesis. However, in the second quotation, it seems that the synthesis is understood as that of two opposing Divine attributes. This synthesis of "two opposing Divine attributes" is closely related to the concept of God as the *coincidentia oppositorum*.⁽³⁶⁾ Ibn 'Arabī seems to have accepted

this notion of God from the early Sufi, Abū Sa'īd Kharrāz.⁽³⁷⁾ According to Kharrāz (as reported by Ibn 'Arabī), God can be understood only as the synthesis of two opposing Names, such as the First and the Last, the Manifest and the Hidden.⁽³⁸⁾ However, in Ibn 'Arabī the *coincidentia oppositorum* is not limited to God, but extended to man, because only in man, are all the opposing Names of God manifested.

At the second level, the synthesis is not only that of "two opposing" Divine Names and Attributes, but all the Divine Names and Attributes, and all the realities (*ḥaqā'iq*)⁽³⁹⁾ of the universe, as can be seen in the second and fourth quotations.⁽⁴⁰⁾ In the fourth quotation Adam is called the exemplar which unites all the Divine Names (Names of Essence, Names of Attributes, and Names of Actions).⁽⁴¹⁾ The Biblical *Ḥadīth*, "God created Adam in His image" is interpreted to express this synthesis of the Divine Names in Adam, because His image is nothing but the Divine Presence, i.e., the Divine Names. In order to understand the synthesis on this level, it is necessary to investigate the function of the Divine Names and the realities of the universe in Ibn 'Arabī's metaphysics.

In Ibn 'Arabī, God as the Absolute Existent is utterly transcendent, having no relation at all with the universe. First, God manifests Himself in the Divine Presence, i.e., the image of God, which consists of the Divine Names, the principle of multiplicity. However, at this stage, the multiplicity has not yet been differentiated. Only through this universe, are the Names of God differentiated. They manifest themselves in this universe as realities, through which all the diverse existents are distinguished from each other. Realities can be best interpreted as "meanings" (*ma'ānī*), or "abstract concepts". In each existent of the universe except man, the Divine Names are not manifest in their entirety, because no existent has all the realities. (For instance, a dog does not have the reality of wood, i.e., woodness.) However, only in man, are all the Divine Names manifest, because man has all the realities of the universe within him. And because of these realities, man can know all the existents of the universe. Thus the concept of "realities" is closely related to Ibn 'Arabī's epistemology.⁽⁴²⁾ Man's knowledge of the universe through the realities inherent in him is essential to the differentiation of the universe. Ibn 'Arabī seems to think that, if man were not in the universe, a tree would not be even a tree, and a mountain not a mountain. He compares the universe before the creation of man to an unpolished mirror, a kind of *materia prima*, a soundless, colorless, shapeless world.⁽⁴³⁾ Only through

man, is the universe polished and able to reflect the image of God. Furthermore, man is compared to the pupil (*insān*) of the eye through which God sees His creation.⁽⁴⁴⁾ The purpose of the creation is God's desire to see Himself outside Himself,⁽⁴⁵⁾ and this is only achieved through man. And as can be seen in the first quotation, with man's disappearance from this world and his transference to the next world, this world dissolves into primordial chaos. However, in the next world (i.e., Heaven and Hell) man will exist eternally, and the world will be forever preserved through him.

III. The Perfect Man as Sufi gnostic (*ʿārif*)

We have so far examined the four instances of the Perfect Man in the *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*. However, the remaining three examples scattered in the book show a different use of this phrase. In this section we shall analyze these three instances one by one.

5. The most amazing thing is that man, that is, the Perfect Man is the highest among existents (*mawjūdāt*). However, "height" is attributed to man only consequentially (*bi al-ṭabaʿiyya*) upon the place or upon the rank, which is the station (*manzila*). In other words, his height does not belong to his essence (*dhāt*). Man is high because of the height of his place or rank. Thus "height" belongs to the place or to the rank.⁽⁴⁶⁾

Since in the above quotation the Perfect Man is equated to man, it may seem that its usage is same as in the previous section. However, the above text makes it clear that the supreme height of man (discussed in the previous section) does not belong to man essentially, but only consequentially upon his place or rank. Therefore, it is different from the thought analyzed in the previous section, in which "man" is discussed in a general and universal sense; the discussion there is not limited to any particular class of man. However, it becomes clear from the following quotation that in the fifth quotation, only a limited class of man is meant.

6. As for the vicegerents among people, if their height of vicegerency were the height essential to them, then everyone would possess this height. But since it is not general, we know that the height [of vicegerency]

belongs to the rank.⁽⁴⁷⁾

Therefore man's supreme height as the vicegerency of God on earth does not belong to every man essentially, but it is the height which only the chosen ones can acquire consequentially upon the rank they reach.⁽⁴⁸⁾ In the fifth quotation, Ibn 'Arabī explains the word "rank" (*makāna*) with "station" (*manzila*). "Station" is the technical term peculiar to Sufism. "*Manāzil*" (pl. of *manzila*) are the spiritual stations Sufis must pass through on their journey toward God. In other words, the supreme rank of vicegerency for which man is created can only be attained by the Sufis who have achieved the highest spiritual station. In this respect, the Perfect Man can be interpreted not as man in general, but as the chosen few, that is, Sufi saints.

How can this usage of the Perfect Man be then reconciled with the usage in the previous section? The key to this question is provided in the passage which follows immediately the fourth quotation.

7. God subjected (*sakhkhara*) to him [Adam, the Perfect Man] the higher world and the lower world because of the perfection of his image. Just as there is nothing in the universe which does not praise God (cf. Qur'an, 17/44), so is there nothing in the universe which is not subjected to him because of that [perfection] which the reality of his image gives him. God said, "He has subjected to you, as a charge from Him, all that is in the heavens and the earth." (Qur'an, 45/13). Therefore everything in the universe is kept in subjection (*taskhīr*) to man. Whoever knows this knows this, and he is Perfect Man; whoever does not know this does not know this, and he is Animal Man (*al-insān al-ḥayawān*).⁽⁴⁹⁾

First, it should be noted in the above quotation that the Perfect Man is contrasted with the Animal Man (*al-insān al-ḥayawān*). This contrast is found several times in the *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkīya*.⁽⁵⁰⁾ In the '*Uqlat al-Mustawfīz*, the Animal Man is contrasted with man. Here "man" is used as a synonym of the Perfect Man, as we have already discussed in the first section.⁽⁴⁹⁾

8. Since the Perfect Man⁽⁵¹⁾ exists in the perfect image [of God], he deserves the vicegerency and deputyship of God in the universc. Then let us explain in this section the formation of this vicegerency, his station

(*manzila*), and his real image. We do not mean by "man" the Animal Man, rather we mean man as vicegerent. Through humanity and vicegerency, man deserves the perfect image. Every man is not vicegerent. In our opinion, the Animal Man is not vicegerent.⁽⁵²⁾

We have already seen in the sixth quotation that not every man is vicegerent, and vicegerency is the rank which is achieved by the chosen few. Thus we can conclude that those who attain this height are the Perfect Man and those who do not, the Animal Man.

Secondly, in the seventh quotation, Ibn 'Arabī shows his peculiar paradoxical thinking. Man who knows his supreme ontological status described in the first section is the real subject of this ontology, that is, the Perfect Man;⁽⁵³⁾ man who is ignorant of his status and value does not deserve to be the subject of this ontology. Such a man does not share the supreme rank of man to whom all creatures are subjected, but his rank is equal to other animals.⁽⁵⁴⁾ How can this supreme knowledge which elevates man to the Perfect Man be acquired? The answer can be found in the following quotation, which is the last example of "the Perfect Man" in the *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*.

9. Since the manifestation of God takes various shapes, the heart must also widen or narrow in accordance with the shapes of His manifestation. The heart cannot exceed the shapes of His manifestation, for the heart of a gnostic (*'arīf*), that is, the Perfect Man, corresponds to the station (*manzila*) of the setting (*maḥall*) of the jewel (*faṣṣ*) on the ring; the setting does not exceed the size of the jewel, rather it follows the size and the shape of the jewel. If the jewel is round, the setting is round; if it is square, or hexagonal, or octagonal, the setting is also square, or hexagonal or octagonal.⁽⁵⁵⁾

In the above quotation, it is clear that the Perfect Man is not man in general, but the Sufi gnostic (*'arīf*), the possessor of the divine Gnosis (*ma'rifa*). Here, the heart of the gnostic is compared to the setting of the jewel, and the jewel to the manifestation of God in various shapes. Then how should we understand this divine manifestation?

After the eighth quotation, Ibn 'Arabī refutes the commonly held view that God manifests Himself in accordance with the predisposition (*isti'dād*) of

man,⁽⁵⁶⁾ and supports the view that man receives the manifestation of God by transforming his heart in accordance with the shapes of His manifestation. Furthermore, in order to reconcile these two opposing views he introduces the two types of manifestation: invisible (*tajallī ghayb*) and visible (*tajallī shahāda*).⁽⁵⁷⁾

Through the first manifestation the predisposition is given to the heart. This is the manifestation of the Divine Identity (*hūwīya*).⁽⁵⁸⁾ Thereafter God manifests Himself in various visible shapes.

The first manifestation (i.e., that of the Divine Identity) should be interpreted through Ibn 'Arabi's doctrine of the "unity of existence" (*waḥdat al-wujūd*). This is the manifestation of God's Absolute Existence, and does not contain any multiplicity and differentiation. The existence of God is immanent in all existents equally.⁽⁵⁹⁾ In this respect, man is not superior to any other existent in the universe.

The second manifestation is that of the Divine Names. In this manifestation, God manifests Himself in various shapes of the universe according to the latent predisposition of each existent. In other words, the Divine Names manifest themselves as the realities of the existents in the universe. In the case of man, God manifests Himself in his heart as the God created in his belief (*al-Ḥaqq al-makhlūq fī al-i'tiqād*).⁽⁶⁰⁾ It means that man knows and sees God in one of the Divine Names peculiar to him. This God is in reality his own self reflected in the mirror of Divinity.⁽⁶¹⁾ However, if one believes only in the God created in his belief, he cannot be said to be the synthesis of all the Divine Names, because he restricts the infinite possibilities of the manifestation of God to one particular shape, and denies His manifestation in other shapes.

10. He who restricts God [to the God created in his belief] denies Him in other beliefs, affirming Him only when He is manifest in his own belief. He who does not restrict Him thus does not deny Him, but affirms God in every shape of His manifestation, worshipping Him in His infinite shapes, since there is no limit to the shapes in which He manifests Himself.⁽⁶²⁾

God is manifest in every created being and in every concept.⁽⁶³⁾ The gnostic (*'arīf*) is the one who sees God in everything,⁽⁶⁴⁾ and worships Him in the infinite shapes of His manifestation.

11. For the gnostic (*'arīf*) God is the one known who is never denied ... For this reason, He says, "for those who have the heart (*qalb*)", (Qur'an, 50/37), i.e., those who know the shapes of the transformation (*taqallub*) of God by changing (*taqlīb*) his heart into [many] shapes.⁽⁶⁵⁾

Ibn 'Arabī contrasts the heart with the intellect (*'aql*) as an instrument to know God.⁽⁶⁶⁾ The latter restricts and tries to define God within the framework of the God created in belief. It is the instrument used by theologians and philosophers. But the heart of the gnostic accepts every shape of God's manifestation by changing its shape. In this way, the totality of the Divine Names is manifest in him. As we have seen in the first section, this totality, that is, the synthesis which Adam, the Perfect Man possesses, characterizes human existence, and gives man the rank of the vicegerent of God on earth. On the other hand, those who limit God's manifestation to one particular shape, that is, to one particular Divine Name, cannot be said to realize this synthesis. In this respect, they are not different from animals. Only Sufi gnostics, who see the manifestation of the Divine Names in every existent of the universe, can be called man in the true sense of the word. And the Perfect Man signifies this true sense of the word "man", that is, the synthesis of the Divine Names, the vicegerent of God over all the creatures. In other words, this metaphysical, ontological idea of man, that is, the Perfect Man discussed in the first section, is embodied only by Sufi gnostics.

Notes

* This is a reworked and enlarged version of my paper, "Ibn 'Arabī's Use of the Phrase, "the Perfect Man" in the *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*," written in Japanese and published in *Oriente (Bulletin of the Society for Near Eastern Studies in Japan)*, XXV, No. 1 (1982), 73-86.

(1) E. g., Tor Andrae, *Die person Muhammads in lehre und glauben seiner gemeinde* (Stockholm, 1918), pp. 349-352; H. S. Nyberg, *Kleinere Schriften des Ibn al-'Arabi* (Leiden, 1919), pp. 92-103; R. A. Nicholson, "Some Notes on the *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*," in *Studies in Islamic Mysticism* (Cambridge, 1921), pp. 149-161; H. H. Schaefer, "Die islamische Lehre vom Vollkommenen Menschen, ihre Herkunft und ihre dichterische Gestaltung," *ZDMG*, LXXIX (1925), 237-245; Asin Palacios, "El místico murciano Abenarabi, IV. Su teología y sistema del cosmos," *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia*, XCII (1928), 739-746; A. E. Affifi, *The Mystical Philosophy of Muhyid Din Ibnul Arabi* (Cambridge, 1939), pp. 77-85; T. Burckhardt, *An Introduction to Sufi Doctrine*, trans. D. M. Matheson (Lahore, 1959), pp. 85-91. So far, the most detailed and illuminating study on this subject is T. Izutsu, *Sufism and Taoism, A Comparative Study of Key Philosophical Concepts* (Tokyo, 1983), pp. 218-262.

(2) As for Jāmī's theory of the Perfect Man, see W. C. Chittick, "The Perfect Man in the Sufism of Jāmī," *Studia Islamica*, XLIX (1979), 135-157.

(3) Jili's book, *al-Insān al-Kāmil* is analyzed by Nicholson in *Studies* pp. 77-142.

(4) Affi says that there are no less than twenty-two terms which Ibn 'Arabī uses to designate the pre-existent Logos, and gives eighteen examples of such terms, including "the Perfect Man." (*Mystical Philosophy*, p. 66.)

(5) Already Sa'd al-Dīn Sa'id Farghānī, who was a disciple of al-Qūnawī, considered the Perfect Man equivalent to the Muhammadan Reality or the Reality of Realities. (Chittick, "Perfect Man," p. 137). Affi (*Mystical Philosophy*, pp. 66–101) and S. H. Nasr (*Three Muslim Sages* [Cambridge, Mass., 1964], pp. 110–11) identify the Perfect Man of Ibn 'Arabī with the Logos, and discuss it under the headline of the Logos doctrine.

(6) This identification is explicitly stated by Jili in the *al-Insān al-Kāmil fī Ma'rīfat al-Awā-khir wa al-Awā'il* (Cairo, 1970), II, 72. R. Arnaldez in his article, "al-Insān al-Kāmil," in the *EI*² confuses the concept of the Muhammadan Reality with the Perfect Man. After quoting from the *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiya* (I, chap. 6) the passage relevant only to the Muhammadan Reality, since the phrase "the Perfect Man" does not appear there, he concludes: "Thus the Perfect Man, the archetype of the universe and humanity, is not Adam but Muhammad."

(7) The phrase appears in pseudo-Plutarch's *Fi Arā'i al-Ṭabī'iya* (H. Daiber, *Aetius Arabus, Die Vorsokratiker in Arabischer Überlieferung* [Wiesbaden, 1980], p. 92.) However, the phrase is not used as a technical term. The possible Isma'ili origin of the phrase is discussed by Muṣṭafā al-Shaybī in the *al-Ṣila bayna al-Taṣawwuf wa al-Tashayyū'* (Cairo, 1969), pp. 464–65.

(8) R. A. Nicholson, "al-Insān al-Kāmil," *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leiden, 1974), p. 170; idem, *Studies*, p. 77; A. Jeffery, "Ibn al-'Arabī's *Shajarat al-Kawn*," *Studia Islamica*, X (1959), 51, n. 1; Nasr, *Muslim Sages*, p. 110.

(9) These are the *Inshā' al-Dawā'ir*, the *Uqlat al-Mustawfiz*, and the *al-Tadbīrāt al-Ilāhiya*, all edited in Nyberg's work cited *supra*, n. 1. The phrase occurs in the *al-'Uqlat al-Mustawfiz*, p. 45. The passage is translated *infra*, pp. 94–95, Quotation 8. See also *infra*, n. 53.

(10) A. Jeffery, "Ibn al-'Arabī's *Shajarat al-Kawn*," *Studia Islamica*, X (1959), 43–77; XI (1959), 113–160.

(11) Nasr, *Muslim Sages*, p. 166, n. 66.

(12) In my previous article mentioned above, I counted eight occurrences by including the pronoun which stands for the Perfect Man in the last sentence of the first quotation.

(13) Further below in this quotation, man is compared to the seal (*khatm*) which protects the treasure house, i. e., the universe. However, here man is compared to the jewel (*faṣṣ*), and the universe to the seal ring (*khātam* or *khātim*). "*Faṣṣ*" is a precious stone on which the name or the insignia of the owner is engraved. Thus the two things (the jewel and the seal) to which man is compared are related. However, since the two things (the ring and the treasure house) to which the universe is compared are different, the two pairs of comparisons should be considered separately. As for the first pair (i. e., the jewel and the ring), Jāmī comments as follows: "Just as the jewel makes the ring perfect, and its absence makes the ring imperfect, so man makes the universe perfect and his absence makes the universe imperfect." ('Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, *Sharḥ 'alā Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, in the margin of al-Nābulusi's commentary, *Sharḥ Jawāhir al-Nuṣūṣ* [Cairo, A. H. 1304], I, 29).

(14) "The next world" (*al-ākhirā* or *al-dār al-ākhirā*) and "this world" (*al-dunyā* or *al-dār al-dunyā*) should not be confused with "the higher world" (*al-'ālam al-a'lā*) and "the lower world" (*al-'ālam al-asfal*). For instance, in the seventh quotation (*infra*, p. 94) the latter terms are used. While the higher world corresponds to the intelligible world, that is, the Divine Presence, the next world means Paradise and Hell. This world continues to exist only for a limited period of time. After the disappearance of this world, God will create the next world, which will continue to exist forever; cf. Ibn 'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiya* (4 vols; Beirut, 1968), I, 123. Therefore in this passage there is no implication of the salvation of fallen man, such as is found in Gnostic myths.

(15) Ibn 'Arabī, *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, ed. A. A. 'Afifi (Cairo, 1946), p. 50.

(16) Qāshānī comments on "these two attributes" as follows: "i. e., two opposing (*mutaqābi-*

latayn) attributes which God possesses such as manifestation (*ẓuhūr*) and concealment (*buṭūn*), satisfaction (*riḍā*) and wrath (*ghaḍab*), beauty (*jamāl*) and majesty (*jalāl*). ('Abd al-Razzāq al-Qāshānī, *Sharḥ 'alā Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* [Cairo, 1966], p. 27).

(17) *Fuṣūṣ*, p. 55.

(18) It means that some Divine Names manifest themselves in every existent in the universe as realities (*ḥaqā'iq*) in accordance with its latent predisposition. See *infra*, p. 92; p. 96.

(19) *Fuṣūṣ*, p. 55.

(20) *Ibid.*, p. 199.

(21) Andrae, *Die person Muhammets*, pp. 348–49; Nyberg, *Kleinere Schriften*, pp. 92–94; Schaeder, "Die islamische Lehre," pp. 201–218.

(22) R. Reitzenstein, *Poimandres. Studien zur griechisch-ägyptischen und frühchristlichen Literatur* (Leipzig, 1904); W. Bousset, *Hauptprobleme der Gnosis* (Göttingen, 1907).

(23) The phrase appears in Hippolytus' report on the Gnostic sect of the Naassenes (Hippolytus, *Refutatio*, V. 8. 20f) and in a later Gnostic book found in Egypt, the *Pistis Sophia* (C. Schmidt and W. Till, *Koptisch-gnostische Schriften* [Berlin, 1962], I, 81); cf. Andrae, *Die person Muhammets*, p. 349; Schaeder, "Die islamische Lehre," p. 212. Concerning the doctrines of the Naassenes, see also M. Schenke, *Der Gott »Mensch« in der Gnosis* (Göttingen, 1962), pp. 57–60; W. D. Berner, *Initiationsriten in Mysterienreligionen, im Gnostizismus und im antiken Judentum*, (Ph. D. dissertation, University of Göttingen, 1972), pp. 131–136.

(24) Concerning the Urmensch myth of Gnosticism, besides the two books mentioned in n. 22, I used M. Schenke, *Der Gott »Mensch«*, and H. Jonas, *The Gnostic Religion* (2d ed.; Boston, 1963).

(25) It does not mean that imaginative cosmogonic myths are lacking in Ibn 'Arabī's writings, but it simply means that the phrase, "the Perfect Man," does not occur in these myths.

(26) The angels' dissatisfaction at God's decision and their protest are interpreted by Ibn 'Arabī in the *Fuṣūṣ*, pp. 50–51.

(27) The angels' prostration before Adam is one of Ibn 'Arabī's bases for his view that man is the highest among all the creatures. At the beginning of the *Inshā' al-Dawā'ir* (p. 4) he says that he wrote this treatise to his friend to explain to him the high rank (*martaba*) which his friend occupies in existence and his high dignity (*sharaf*) — so much so that even the angels humbled themselves by prostrating before him.

(28) This *Ḥadīth* also furnishes the basis for his epistemology. See my paper, "The *Homo Imago Dei* Motif and the Anthropocentric Metaphysics of Ibn 'Arabī in the *Inshā' al-Dawā'ir*," *Orient*, XIII (1982), 111–128.

(29) The myth of the fall of the Urmensch also has as its counterpart the ascent and the salvation of fallen man. Because Ibn 'Arabī's theory of the Perfect Man lacks the myth of the fall, it also lacks this soteriological aspect. The Perfect Man is not the Mahdi nor Jesus who will appear near the End of Time. Therefore L. Massignon's identification of the Perfect Man with the Mahdi in his article, "L'homme parfait et son originalité eschatologique," *Eranos Jahrbuch*, XV (1947), 287–314, is irrelevant as far as Ibn 'Arabī's theory is concerned.

(30) *Inshā'*, p. 18. See also my article, "An Analysis of Ibn 'Arabī's *Inshā' al-Dawā'ir* with Particular Reference to the Doctrine of the 'Third Entity'," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, XLI, No. 4 (1982), 251–52.

(31) For instance, the creation of Eve from Adam and their expulsion from Eden are not mentioned in the description of Adam as the Perfect Man.

(32) See also my paper, "The *Homo Imago Dei* Motif," pp. 12–24.

(33) The verse is cited in the seventh quotation (*infra*, p. 94) and in the poem of the *Inshā' al-Dawā'ir* (p. 4). This verse together with the story of the angels' prostration to Adam provides the Qur'anic basis for his doctrine of man's superiority over other creatures. See *supra*, n. 27.

(34) "He made the human formation (*nash'a insāniya*) the spirit of the universe, and made all the species of the universe like the members of the body to this controlling spirit. If this

man is separated from the universe, the universe will die." (*Futūḥāt*, II, 468).

(35) "He is man, both temporal and eternal, the continuous and everlasting formation, and the dividing and unifying word." (*Fuṣūṣ*, p. 50); "God united His two hands for [the creation of] Adam only to honor him. For this reason, He said to Iblis, "What prevents you from prostrating to one whom I created with My two hands?" (Qur'an, 38/75). What prevents him is the very fact that Adam unites two images (*ṣūratayn*), that is, the image of the universe and the image of God, and these two are the two hands of God." (*Fuṣūṣ*, p. 55); "Man consists of two copies (*nuskhatāni*), that is, the outer (*ẓāhira*) copy and the inner (*bāṭina*) copy. The outer copy corresponds to the universe ... and the inner copy corresponds to the Divine Presence." (*Inshā'*, p. 21). Ibn 'Arabī's anthropology can be compared with that of Gregory of Nazianzus, who says, "I am small and great, lowly and high, mortal and immortal, earthly and heavenly. The one condition I share with this world below, the other with God, the one with the flesh, the other with the spirit." (*Orationes*, 7. 23, quoted by Anna-Stina Ellversson, *The Dual Nature of Man, A Study in the Theological Anthropology of Gregory of Nazianzus* [Uppsala, 1981], p. 17.)

(36) For the historical development of this concept, see Ewert H. Cousins, *Bonaventure and the Coincidence of Opposites* (Chicago, 1978), pp. 15–27.

(37) For his extant works and doctrines, see W. Madelung, "al-Kharrāz," *EI*².

(38) *Fuṣūṣ*, p. 77.

(39) I analyzed the concept of "*ḥaqā'iq*" in Ibn 'Arabī's metaphysics in "An Analysis of Ibn 'Arabī's *Inshā'*," pp. 245–251.

(40) Ibn 'Arabī answers the question Ḥakīm Tirmidhī asks in the *Khatm al-Awliyā'*, "What is the attribute (*ṣifa*) of Adam?" as follows: "If you wish, it is the attribute of Divine Presence, and if you wish, it is the totality (*majmū'*) of the Divine Names ... When God united His two hands for His creation of Adam, we understand that He gave him the attribute of perfection and created him as perfect and comprehensive (*jāmi'*), for this reason he received all the Names. He is the totality (*majmū'*) of the universe with respect to its realities." (*Futūḥāt*, II, 67); cf. Ḥakīm Tirmidhī, *Kitāb Khatm al-Awliyā'*, ed. 'Uthmān Yaḥyā (Beirut, 1965), pp. 198–99.

(41) In the *Inshā' al-Dawā'ir* (pp. 27–30), Ibn 'Arabī classifies the Divine Names into the Names of the Essence (*asmā' al-dhāt*), the Names of Attributes (*asmā' al-ṣifāt*), and the Names of Actions (*asmā' al-aḥwāl*), and calls the chart of the above classification the chart of the Divine Presence (*jadwal al-ḥaḍra al-ilāhiya*).

(42) See my article, "The *Homo Imago Dei* Motif," pp. 115–121.

(43) *Fuṣūṣ*, p. 49. T. Burckhardt explains "the unpolished mirror" in the following way: "C'est le chaos primordial, où les possibilités de manifestation, encore virtuelles, se confondent dans l'indifférenciation de leur *materia*. (Ibn 'Arabī, *La Sagesse des Prophètes* (*Fuṣūṣ al-Hikam*), trans. T. Burckhardt [Paris, 1974], p. 22, n. 7.) Ibn 'Arabī's statement that man is the spirit of the universe (*supra*, p. 91, and n. 34) should be also understood in this context.

(44) *Fuṣūṣ*, p. 50.

(45) *Ibid.*, p. 48.

(46) *Ibid.*, p. 75.

(47) *Ibid.*, p. 76.

(48) It must be mentioned here that at the end of the same chapter (the chapter on Idris), Ibn 'Arabī states the apparently contradictory idea: "If you understand what I explained to you concerning the meaning of "the High", you should know that it is not the height of the place nor of the rank; the height of the rank is specialized by the administration of the affairs like Sultan, governors, ministers, judges, and every high official, regardless of whether they are fit for there office or not. However, the height through attributes is not of this kind. Therefore the wisest person may be governed by a high government official who may be the most ignorant of people. This [height of government officials] is high through the rank, through the power of accident. He is not high in himself. If he is removed [from the post], his high position ceases. The wise man (*ālīm*) is not of this kind." (*ibid.*, p. 80). Previously Ibn 'Arabī speaks of "the High" (*ālī*)

as one of the Names of God, and states that only God is high in himself. Therefore in the above passage, "high in himself" should be interpreted as a Divine Name. Since in the Sufi gnostic ('*ārīf*') all the names of God are manifested, also the Divine Name "the High" belongs to him. Ibn 'Arabī writes: "Thus in a certain sense, relative beings are high in themselves, since they are none other than He." (*ibid.*, p. 76). In other words, the relative height of the Perfect Man over all creatures comes from his place or rank, but his absolute height is the manifestation of the Divine Name, "the High".

(49) *Ibid.*, p. 199.

(50) E. g., *Futūḥāt*, II, 293-96; III, 296.

(51) The word "Perfect" (*al-kāmil*) appears only in one manuscript. Therefore it is probably a later insertion; cf. Nyberg, *Kleinere Schriften*, p. 92.

(52) *Uqlat al-Mustawfīz*, pp. 45-46.

(53) Man's knowledge of his ontological status is ultimately his knowledge of himself, and man's self-knowledge is nothing else than his knowledge of God. See my paper, "The *Homo Imago Dei* Motif," pp. 115-121.

(54) "If one does not attain the degree of perfection (*rubat al-kamāl*), one is an animal whose outer form resembles man." (*Futūḥāt*, II, p. 468). The Animal Man is distinguished from other animals only through specific differences, just as horses are distinguished from donkeys and other animals. Thus the difference between them is not the difference in rank; cf. *ibid.*, III, 297.

(55) *Fuṣṣ*, p. 120.

(56) This is an ordinary man's understanding of God. He believes only in the particular shape in which God manifests Himself in accordance with his latent predisposition. H. Corbin calls this view "*kathēnothēisme mystique*". (H. Corbin, *L'imagination créatrice dans le soufisme d'Ibn 'Arabī* [2d ed.: Paris, 1976], p. 152). This God which is different for each person in accordance with his predisposition is called by Ibn 'Arabī the God created in belief. He writes: "This is, indeed, the God which the slave [i.e., man] creates in his heart, either through his theoretical opinion or through his tradition. He is the God as the object of belief (*al-ilāh al-mu'taqad*); this God varies in accordance with the predisposition (*isti'dād*) which is present in this place [i.e., the heart of each person]." Then he quotes the words of Junayd, "The color of water is the color of its vessel." (*Fuṣṣ*, p. 220).

(57) These two types of manifestation correspond to the most sacred emanation (*al-fayḍ al-aqdas*) and the eternally manifesting emanation (*al-fayḍ al-tajallī al-dā'im*), *ibid.*, p. 49, and also to the gifts of the Essence (*'aṭāyā dhātīya*) and the gifts of the Names (*'aṭāyā asmā'īya*), *ibid.*, p. 58.

(58) "*Hūwīya*" is the abstract noun of the pronoun "*hūwa*" (he), and usually rendered as "identity" or "ipseity". Nyberg relates this term to the expression of Ḥallāj, "*hūwa hūwa*". (*Kleinere Schriften*, p. 93, n. 2.) However, in the medieval Arabic translation of Plotinus, "*to einai*" (existence) is rendered as "*hūwīya*". Hence "*hūwīya*" seems to be a synonym of "*wujūd*" (existence); cf. S. Pinès, "Les textes arabes dits plotiniens et le courant porphyrien dans le néoplatonisme grec," *Le Néoplatonisme*, Colloques Internationaux du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (Paris, 1971), pp. 305-07; p. 313. Thus the "*hūwīya*" of God means His Existence, that is, the Absolute Existence. It must be also noted that in Ibn 'Arabī the Divine Essence (*dhāt*) is identical with the Absolute Existence. (Affifi, *The Mystical Philosophy*, p. 5). Therefore, the "*hūwīya*" of God can be also interpreted as "the unknowable incommunicable Essence of God". (*ibid.*, p. 12; p. 24, n. 1). According to T. P. Hughes, some Qur'anic commentators have supposed the word *Hū* (i. e. *hūwa*) to stand for the exalted name of God, the *ism al-a'zam*, which is only known to God. (T. P. Hughes, *A Dictionary of Islam* [Delhi, 1973], p. 181). However, as for the "*hūwīya*" as the translation of the Greek word "*to einai*", it might have been derived from the Syriac copula "*hwā*" (to be), not from the Arabic pronoun "*hūwa*".

(59) "Were it not for the permeation (*saryān*) of God, by means of His form (*ṣūra*), in all existents, the universe would have no existence, just as, were it not for the intelligible, universal

realities, no predication (*ḥukm*) would be manifest in concrete existents (*mawjūdāt ‘aynīya*).” *Fuṣūṣ*, p. 55; cf. my paper, “An Analysis of Ibn ‘Arabi’s *Inshā’*,” p. 256 and n. 69.

(60) See *supra*, n. 56, and Corbin, *L’imagination créatrice*, pp. 151–54.

(61) *Fuṣūṣ*, p. 61; p. 113; p. 184.

(62) *Ibid.*, p. 121.

(63) *Ibid.*, p. 73.

(64) *Ibid.*, p. 192. Ibn ‘Arabi also writes: “The perfect gnostic (*al-‘arīf al-mukammal*) is the one who sees every object of worship (*ma‘būd*) as the locus of the manifestation (*majallī*) of God in which He is worshipped. For this reason, they name it a God (*ālih*), although its particular name might be stone, tree, animal, man, or angel.” (*ibid.*, p. 190). “If one understands the meaning of Junayd’s words, ‘The color of water is the color of its vessel,’ he would allow every believer his belief, and know God in every form and belief.” (*ibid.*, p. 226). Thus, the gnostics’ understanding of God transcends “*kathénothéisme mystique*” (*supra*, n. 56). “Il semble que pour Ibn ‘Arabi, une explication inverse de ce «kathénothéisme mystique» vaille préférence quand il s’agit du gnostique (*‘arīf*). Ce n’est pas le cœur qui donne sa «couleur» à la Forme qu’il reçoit, mais inversement le cœur du gnostique «se colore» à chaque instant de la couleur, c’est-à-dire de la modalité de la Forme sous laquelle l’Être Divin s’épiphانىse à lui.” Corbin, *L’imagination créatrice*, p. 152.

(65) *Fuṣūṣ*, p. 122.

(66) *Ibid.*